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(1918)

Charleston

Nov. 11.

My Billy

In spite of knowing it must happen the news of the armistice today has been very exciting. It wasn't in the mornings paper of course but Bunny came back almost at once from work after lunch with the news of it & then came a report from Firle & then a telegram from Clive who had just left & promised to let us know. I am left alone, for a few hours at least, to consider it. Bunny at once rushed off in a very emotional state to London to see what the crowds were doing. Duncan has

so & see Nelly & tell me all about her & about Ka — what is that household like? Young Liberal trying to be wife is what I imagine.
Yours VB

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Yours VB

gone to see what is like seen at Brighton but will be back tonight. I suppose you may all be walking the streets & perhaps lights are turned on & people are shouting as though have to do something. But its raining & not a very good evening for rejoicing & probably also though still have to economise with coal & so wont have much light allowed. The relief of knowing there is no more fighting is very odd I think but also the waste of the whole thing strikes me as more idiotic than ever. You have heard I suppose that Barbara has a daughter. Another female Bagenal! Its

not an inspiriting thought.
Your letter of course was most amusing. Why did you change your proportions & give the bulk of it to gossip etc.? We are longing to hear more of Ka & Wide- [illegible] to say nothing of all the others.
However – about Mary – I don't see why you should bother any more about it. Gertler seems to have been incredibly malicious & did give an extraordinary account to Jack of his talks with you, in which he made out that you had abused Mary & at second hand that I did too. Jack repeated all to Mary (perhaps with embroideries) anyhow she was not unnaturally rather upset. But

is everyone has taken the opportunity to assure her that they have the greatest admiration for her, she has in the end come out of it very well. It shows that one should beware of gentlei but I dont think you need now do anything unless you want to as he has been exposed. I think its all become a thing of the past.

About the wood blocks. I will do a small one, less than half the size of the other. Could you send me that back? I see I must cut out some more & make it clearer in places. Im very glad you think it suitable - I hope the other will be so too. - Its a caterpillar & various insects

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& leaves etc. but it may be <u>too</u> incoherent.

As for your food – it hasnt arrived & I only hope it hasnt been stolen! It is wicked of you to send food (the St Ivel cheese <u>did</u> arrive & was delicious) I feel I ought to send you some not you me – We killed our pig last week & have been living on masses of pork etc since – more than we know what to do with almost. But I didnt see how to send it to you or anyone else so we have simply been gorged with huge pre-war meals. All the nicest parts are still to come – hams & bacon & all cured meats.

were altogether in great luxury
now. They send us masses of
butter for some reason instead
of less butter & more margarine
& jam which we never got
before it was rationed. &
even coal has begun to
arrive. Also one no longer
feels that everything will grad-
ually dwindle. which is a
relief to the housekeeping
mind. My household goes
smoothly. Jenny is quite a
good cook & quite nice & much
more intelligent than Emily.
I live in peace & am
really thankful also that
I shall not be burdened with
Trine or even Nelly & Lottie
when the day comes for
change of house. But all one's
plans are still vague — Do

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Friday

You wicked, wicked, extravagant & monstrous ape. You deserve a good beating & shutting up in your cage for a week & if I were there you'd get it. How dared you send off such a parcel — cakes. soups shortbreads. anchovies. sardines. sausages. I dont know what all. I'm simply overcome. While there you sit yourself shaking milk in a bottle to keep yourself alive. Its I who ought to be bombarding you with food from the country instead of calmly eating up a pig & eggs & honey & all.

Well. I suppose I must thank you instead of merely cursing but really you are wicked Billy.

I wish peace came oftener to distract you from your duties & make you write to your poor neglected sister. I'm very much interested in the different accounts I get of the public feeling. You, I see are fairly cynical, as I suspect I should be too. At any rate it seems now as if the rejoicing were getting a little forced! Bunny came back after the first night of peace full of admiration for the feelings of the crowd. Duncan, at Brighton, thought

the young simply very happy & relieved & the Metropolis full of horrors. Duncan's mother writes ecstatically about the flags waving & crowds cheering. Roger seems unaware of any change in the situation. Mr Garnett only wishes we could all have the advantages of defeat. Do tell me more of other people's views. My servants went to Lewes where it was said that a "statue belonging to the Kaiser" was to be burnt. but only had to walk all the way back late at night admitting that it was a very poor show only a rehearsal really for next week's display. There is also said to have been a burning of some mysterious object "made for the Kaiser"

before the war" at Firle!
However the world seems on the whole to be more peaceful in the country than in the towns in spite of these warnings.
We are thinking of giving a week end peace party here possibly, as I can't attend those in London. Do you think it would be possible, if Mrs B. is not too much afraid of the ghost which I think most likely — that she & the children should walk over & pic-nic at Asheham so as to leave room here? They would of course take all they wanted, & would do for themselves & leave all as they found it. The only thing would be they'd need a little coal or wood, & I don't know if you'd be able to spare any

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They wouldnt of course use a very appreciable amount in 2 nights but perhaps you'll want every scrap. So please tell me what you think. I haven't yet broached the possibility to them or Mrs B. in case for any reason you don't think it would do.

If its possible either Dec. 1st or 8th would I think be the date.

I have altered my wood block a good deal & am sending it back to you. I think its better & less incoherent. I have cut 2 blocks since this one, for the book the Omega is bringing out. so I have learnt a little more about it. I am doing a small table piece for you too which I will send in a few days

Duncan & Bunny have got
off completely. as Mr Hicks
doesn't really want them
& takes the view that all
that can happen to them is
to become absentees who
apparently aren't going to be
molested. They'll have to
keep rather quiet I think
till one sees what's going to
happen. but I think its quite
likely they'll simply be let
alone. Bunny is working at
the farm till the end of
this week. Duncan isn't
even doing that. but can
simply stay at home &
paint which is splendid.
He has gone to London now
but comes back tomorrow.

Please write again soon
as I'm sure peace will con-
tinue to demoralise you for
some time & writing to me is
much your best employment.

Yr [illegible] VB

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Charleston

1918

Nov 22.

My Bobby,

I see that these woodcuts make almost daily letters necessary. Well its a good thing you still think I have some rough eloquence & vigour of style. This letter is mainly on business. First I send you the caterpillar woodcut (can you make it out?) I have managed to take fairly good prints of it so you neednt bother about a proof if it is tiresome to send me — Then I write also to say that if you'd really like me to do any more & think they'd add to the attractiveness of the books (which of course modesty makes me doubt) I'd be delighted to do some. I can do them much more easily now & can do them I expect up till Christmas. Only send me the stories as soon as you can or tell me what to do pictures of. As they neednt be accurate illustrations I daresay you can tell me what to do if the stories arent ready yet — (But I'd like to see them) Then I must

[?] did not write the most interesting letter he had ever written to me all about his feelings as he knew I should not reply sympathetically. As you see [?] just going to dine with him no doubt you get the benefit of them. So please write & tell me all about them. [?] V.B. I dont know about their papers till I have given you advice.

(115)

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Yrs V B. I don't know about paper — Mr. will have given you advice.

[Left margin:] [?]id not write the most interesting letter he had ever written to me all about his feelings as he knew I should not reply sympathetically. As you are just going to dine with him no doubt you get the benefit of them. So please write & tell me all about them.

also tell you that our party has been given up. Mrs B. thinks it would be too difficult to take the children to Asheham – it might pour or freeze & they mightn't be able to get there etc. which I think is reasonable considering the time of year. So I needn't bother you about that.

You've heard of course that Karin has produced another Judith. They seem to be very much disappointed. I see girls are the fashion & I suppose I shall follow it too. I daresay it won't much matter. I think it more interesting no doubt & will give it your blessing – at any rate I have two sons to console myself with whereas I suppose the Stephens don't want to have another baby of any kind. Besides of course my daughter would be very nice wouldn't she? I'm very much interested in all the writers' feelings about Peace – of course the Stracheys are simply ashamed of having any feelings they can give a name to. Desmond's seem most natural. But I see there were some advantages in not being able to join in a crowd. You must write & tell me of the safe arrival of the clock – I had a charming letter from Snow today. Full of affection! Roger said in his last letter that he

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Charleston

1918

Dec. 6.

My Billy —

I should have written to you before but I have been in bed for 3 days with a chill. However I'm much better now & getting up — I was afraid the whole household might be starting flue. as Duncan had had lumbago, Emily Jenny & Anne all developed pains of different kinds. So I had the doctor who said mine was only a chill & the others' pains evaporated thank goodness. This letter is on business as usual about your covers. I can do a design if you like but I have another suggestion to make

Keep asking her to return me 3 new silks & cert [illegible] her? 4 [illegible] V.B.

Charleston

(116) (1918)

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My Billy —

I should have written to you before but I have been in bed for 3 days with a chill. However I'm much better now & getting up. I was afraid the whole household might be starting flue as Duncan had bad lumbago, Emily Jenny & Anne all developed pains of different kinds. ~~[illegible]~~ so I had the doctor who said mine was only a chill & the others' pains evaporated thank goodness. This letter is on business as usual about your covers. I can do a design if you like but I have another suggestion to make to

Ka asking her to return me some silks I lent her?

Yr V B.

I think that you'd get
very tired of always having
the same cover. Why
not have marbled covers
done with the same mixture
of paint & paste with which
the Omega does those
printed papers? I think
you could get lovely colours
all the covers would have
the same kind of character
& yet be different & new
colour schemes each time.
It might to be much
cheaper than printing blocks
& it could be done on
any paper you liked to
provide. I suppose you'd
have to stick on labels
but so you would on
Roger's papers. If you
think this a good plan Duncan

is going up to London next
week for a day or two
& could show Wolfe how
to do the marbling. Wolfe
knows about the right
mixture. Of course I
could do them if you
liked but I think Wolfe
would be very good at it
& I suppose the O. might
think whoever did it
ought to do it through
them. I don't see why
they should be at all ex-
pensive as marbling is
very quick work. If
done with the same mixture
it would be as permanent
as the printing.

As to what to pay
me for woodcuts I don't
know what to suggest.
It seems to me your

hardly making it possible
for yourselves to do more
than pay expenses, by asking
so little, are you? Do you
reckon anything for your
own time? I should have
thought people would expect
to pay 2/ or even 2/6 for
a book with 2 woodcuts
even if the story is short.
But perhaps you're wise
to keep it cheap. I daresay
you'd prefer to pay me
a fixed sum & have
done with it but tell me
what you think as you
really know more about
it than I do. I don't know
at all what your expenses
come to – I can't write
more now but wish soon.
Any gossip thankfully received
Could you send on this note to

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Charleston

(1918)

A purely domestic letter Dec 9

My Billy.

I am afraid of being the most awful pest, but I am in rather a quandary & I am writing to ask if you can help me, trusting to your having the sense to refuse if it should be too difficult for you to do so. Its about the children. Would it be possible for you to have them to stay with you for a time when I'm accouched? My plans are these. The family is to arrive on Dec. 27th. The baby might conceivably arrive

as early as Dec. 24th
(in which case I can
get a temporary famp
from Lewes at short
notice) but I dont myself
at all expect it till about
Jan. 3rd I thought I
would keep the children
here till the baby was
born, up to which time
I can keep an eye on
them & Duncan will take
them for walks — Mrs B.
goes off for the holidays
on Dec. 20th — & then
if I might I would
send them over to you
at Asheham where I
suppose you would probably

be – (But I don't know your plans.) I thought possibly they could stay with you a few days & that then perhaps you'd come back here with them to see me & the new creature – & then let them go back to you again either to Asheham or to Richmond for a week or 10 days or even as much as a fortnight, rather according as to how quickly I recovered.

Clive is coming here on Jan. 3rd for a fortnight I think. So

if the baby doesn't arrive before then he could bring the children over to you & fetch them back again if you liked. Otherwise no doubt Duncan or Bunny could.

Trissie offered to come here & look after them while I was in bed but I decided at all costs not to have her in the house as I know she'd upset my other two & make such a commotion. It seems best on the whole to have the house as empty as possible rather

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than fill it up. But though the children dont need much looking after now they would I think have rather a bad time of it with no one to keep an eye on them. Emily is quite the stupidest woman ever known, also she's sometimes very cross to them & they cant bear her.

But you must please be honest with me as its your duty as a sister to be - I daresay you've already got other arrangements made which would make

this impossible, or in any case that Leonard would think it too tiring for you. Of course I've no doubt Trissie would come to you to look after them but I thought you too (& Lottie & Nelly) would probably much prefer not to have her. The children are really quite easy to deal with. They'll play quite happily or read alone all day if allowed to, but it's good for them to have a walk if it can be

managed & they very much enjoy being read aloud to or played with for an hour after tea. They can get themselves up & put themselves to bed, etc. as long as some one can just see that they don't take too many hours over it.

If you can possibly come to my rescue in this way you will make my mind easier by letting me pay for their keep with you? Do you think £2 a week would

be fair? Then I shouldn't feel so much of a shark. –

If you can't have them no doubt I can make other arrangements for them. However I suggest this before trying anything else as I know it would be the greatest possible treat to them to go to you & I should feel sure of their being happy. In fact I don't suppose they'd ever want to come back again if you chose to exert all your attractions which I should trust to your honour not to do. I have no time now to write about anything else but I hope for a letter from you soon. Your V.B.

T. PARSONS 3.2.73